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and the image presented is of an over-stimulated childhood, an over-estimated youth, and an over-wrought life. An enormous capacity for reading, and for talk about reading, and an egotism which staggers one's belief, are the two marked characteristics of her early days ; then followed the not unusual traits of a demand on life for happiness, which life failed to supply ; astonishment at the difference between hope and fulfilment ; many confidential personal relations, in which the reflection and refraction of an exaggerated personality seemed to people the air with visions ; a good deal of work of an unconsecutive kind ; a visit to Europe ; a long stay in Italy ; a secret marriage ; and a final catastrophe of shipwreck, which throws its tragic tinge backward on the preceding years ; — there is something that is interesting, much that is human, in the story, very little that can be helpful or strengthening.

The last thing in the book is Mr. Emerson's sermon. Mr. Frothingham calls it "epoch-making" ; we should call it rather *epoch-marking*. Would that it had inaugurated an epoch in theological writing of similar serenity and clearness in statement, and similar cordial respect for those differing in opinion !

2. — *As to Roger Williams and his Banishment from the Massachusetts Plantation.* BY HENRY MARTYN DEXTER, D. D. Boston : Congregational Publishing Society. 1876.

THIS book is one of those unassuming laborious monographs which have given to modern history its strongest qualities. So well are the general facts of Roger Williams's banishment known, that at first sight it would seem like labor and time misspent to examine them minutely in a quarto volume of one hundred and forty pages. Yet in proportion as the subject is generally known is it also misconceived. The banishment of Williams, with all its attendant circumstances, may not unfairly be taken as a test case of Puritan intolerance. It is a case which exhibits in a striking manner not only how grossly this intolerance has been misrepresented, but also the true nature and real causes of what is familiarly known as Puritan bigotry.

As to Roger Williams, it has become with most persons a matter of settled belief that he was banished from the Massachusetts Colony solely because he was the fearless and far-seeing advocate of religious tolerance, the apostle of "soul liberty," or, in more modern phrase, of liberty of conscience. This wide-spread and firmly rooted belief took a practical shape last winter, when the inhabitants of Sturbridge peti-

tioned the Massachusetts Legislature to remove from their records the sentence of banishment against Williams. This petition was the proximate cause of Mr. Dexter's monograph, by which the author claims to have established for the first time some of the following points, and to have thrown new light on all of them :—

" 1. The great *youth* of Roger Williams when he lived in Massachusetts ; and that he was rash and headstrong.

" 2. That Massachusetts was then scarcely more than a trading-plantation ; hardly a colony ; not yet a State.

" 3. That, lacking prisons for confinement, no course then seemed so feasible for the disposal of incompatible men as dismissal, — which had been done nineteen times before Roger Williams's turn.

" 4. That it is an exaggeration to say that the Court took ' arbitrary action ' in requiring R. W.'s ' treatise.'

" 5. That R. W. never became a freeman of the colony, but did become a house and land holder.

" 6. That R. W. was never ordained at Salem until the spring of 1635, instead of, as has always before been stated, during the summer of the previous year.

" 7. That R. W. himself undertook to secure a desired result in the State by the machinery of the Church.

" 8. That the sending home of the Salem deputies was not in the nature of disfranchisement, and has usually been overstated.

" 9. That, strictly, there was no ' Church and State ' action involved in R. W.'s final trial.

" 10. The first assignment of the genuine date of R. W.'s ' banishment.'

" 11. The marked kindness with which R. W. was treated by the Massachusetts men.

" 12. The fact that Mr. Williams afterwards justified in nearly, if not quite every point the treatment which he received from Massachusetts.

" 13. The facts as to the condition of knowledge, and the popular level of sentiment, of the early days of New England.

" 14. The facts as to Witter's case, suggesting ' a wheel within a wheel.'

" 15. The real character of many, at least, of the early Quakers in New England, as social and public nuisances of the worst description."

Exhaustive citations from the sources fully sustain Mr. Dexter's claim. As to one only of the points just given do we differ from Mr. Dexter. His second proposition is that Massachusetts was a trading-plantation, the success of which was extremely doubtful. Technically this is of course true ; but in reality the colony was the germ of a Commonwealth, was to be the asylum of English Puritans. The wisdom of John Winthrop and his friends was political, not mercantile ; their actions were those of heroes, not of traders ; their purpose was the foundation of a State, not traffic, and their records are the

records of statesmen, not the ledgers of merchants. The precarious existence of the Colony, not its character as a trading-plantation, is the essence of this part of Mr. Dexter's argument, which acquires a tenfold force if the view that the Colony was really regarded by its founders as an infant State be adopted.

The result of Mr. Dexter's investigations can be easily and briefly stated. Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts for purely political and perfectly sound reasons, and in his sentence liberty of conscience had no part.

The last few pages of his book Mr. Dexter devotes to a consideration of the intolerance exhibited in the cases of the Quakers and Baptists. He shows that the members of these sects were in the seventeenth century intolerable nuisances and disturbers of the public peace. He further shows that the Puritans were thoroughly justified, politically, in their efforts to suppress these brawling fanatics. Mr. Dexter concedes, as every one must, that hanging the Quakers was unwise; but he observes very rightly, that as in Old England three hundred and sixty Quakers were executed, and over thirteen thousand suffered persecution, while in all New England only four were executed and one hundred and seventy persecuted, the Puritans were, in this instance at least, considerably in advance of their time. Mr. Dexter might also have added that in those days criminals were not looked upon as an oppressed class, to whom it was proper to send nosegays, but were regarded as the enemies of peace and good government, and when their hanging was demanded by law, hung they generally were.

In both Williams's and the Quakers' case the conclusions reached in this monograph coincide substantially with the opinions of our first authority on Puritan history, Dr. Palfrey. The service so well rendered by Mr. Dexter is to have made Dr. Palfrey's position doubly sure. The closely woven arguments of Mr. Dexter are made perfectly unassailable by the mass of evidence carefully collected and skilfully arranged. Yet, after all has been said, it is useless to disguise the fact that in these and other cases religious feelings were deeply mingled with secular ones. A close examination reveals the fact that, in Roger Williams's as in other cases, the Puritans were, as a rule, too wise ever to proceed to extremities without the strongest and best of purely political reasons; but nevertheless a great deal of what would now be called religious intolerance undoubtedly existed in early New England. To attack the Puritans for this is, however, one of the greatest absurdities that can be committed. They were far from being the most intolerant people in the seventeenth century, and yet they

are censured because they did not act according to the views of the nineteenth. To avoid utter injustice, the first step is to appreciate the difference between the liberality of the present day and that of two centuries ago. But the truest defence of the Puritans rests on much firmer and broader grounds. They have been blamed because people have not stopped to consider their real aims and the conditions of their existence, because they have not tried to put themselves in their place. The Puritans acquired their land not merely by royal patent, but by the abandonment of home, of civilization, and of every comfort. In a place so dearly bought they had an inalienable right to do as they pleased, and it pleased them to try a great political experiment. They had entered into the land and possessed it, and there, in the wilderness, they founded a Puritan State, the asylum for men of their race and religion. In their new country it further pleased them to make Church and State one, and they believed that whoever touched one touched the other, and therefore they defended both with all their strength. They did not come to the barren shores of Massachusetts Bay to obtain for every papist, fanatic, and heretic freedom to worship God after his fashion: they sought freedom to worship God after their own fashion. Whoever interfered with them, or threatened the existence of their government by attacks on Church or State, whether it was Charles the First or Roger Williams, they resisted to the uttermost, and, if they had the power, punished the assailant by exile and sometimes by death. By every law of self-preservation, by every law of common-sense, and common prudence, and with all justice in so doing, they acted strongly and well. No doubt their judgment often erred, for they were human and fallible. No doubt they were often harsh and narrow-minded if tried by our standards or by the standard of such contemporaries as Francis Bacon or John Selden. Yet it is folly and weakness to make apologies for them, for they need none. The Puritans of Massachusetts acted according to their best lights, and they acted like wise, brave men. They built up a strong, enduring State, the corner-stone of a great nation. All these men need is the exact and severe justice of history, and sooner or later the judgment of history must become the verdict of mankind.

Mr. Dexter has earned the gratitude of every student of American history by his careful discussion of Puritan intolerance. His carefully collected citations are of great value for the light they shed on the wide subject of Puritan government. He has, moreover, finally disposed of the tradition of Roger Williams's martyrdom for "soul liberty."